

WHAT ARE THESE DOCUMENTS?

On August 14, 1944, Italian Private Guglielmo Olivotto was lynched at the U.S. Army's Fort Lawton in Seattle.

Within weeks, an experienced Army lawyer named Leon Jaworski (later of Watergate fame) was assigned to investigate the murder and a companion riot between U.S. troops and members of an Italian Service Unit.

At the same time, the War Department's Inspector General's Office ordered U.S. Army Brig. Gen. Elliot D. Cooke to prepare a report about the lynching and riot. Gen. Cooke's mission was not to prosecute; that was Col. Jaworski's job. Cooke's assignment was to determine what had gone wrong at Fort Lawton, and to recommend discipline, if any, for those not charged with crimes by Jaworski.

Between September 10, 1944 and October 5, 1944, Gen. Cooke and his assistants, Lt Col Curtis Williams and Capt. S.K. Tyson, conducted more than 200 interviews, interrogating officers, civilians and enlisted men, including both American soldiers and Italian prisoners of war. Those interviews were all transcribed, and span 1,512 pages.

Gen. Cooke sent two preliminary reports to the Pentagon, dated October 5, 1944 and October 14, 1944. Cooke's final report was dated October 28, 1944.

Cooke's three reports, plus the 1,512 pages of interviews, are collectively known as "**The Cooke Report.**" The report was initially classified; it was declassified by the National Archives and Records Administration at the request of journalists Jack Hamann and Leslie Hamann.

While Leon Jaworski conducted his own independent investigation, he sometimes sat in on Cooke's interrogations. No defense attorneys were ever present. Jaworski eventually charged 43 U.S. soldiers—all of them African American—with rioting. Three of those defendants were also charged with the first degree murder of Pvt. Guglielmo Olivotto.

The transcript of the court-martial is part of the **Internet Archives Jack and Leslie Hamann Collection**. A careful comparison of the Cooke Report and the court-martial transcript shows several instances of inconsistent or contradictory sworn testimony. Although Jaworski had access to these often-damning contradictions, he fought vigorously—and successfully—to withhold the Cooke Report from the two Army lawyers (William Beeks and Howard Noyd) assigned to defend the 43 American soldiers. 28 soldiers were eventually convicted of rioting; two of those were found guilty of Olivotto's death.

After the publication of *On American Soil*, a 2005 book by Jack & Leslie Hamann, the Army Board for Correction of Military Records agreed to review the 1944 Fort Lawton court-martial at the urging of members of Congress, led by Rep. Jim McDermott (D-WA). In October, 2007, the Army Board unanimously ruled that Leon Jaworski had committed "egregious error" in refusing to turn over the Cooke Report to the defense, as required by 1944 rules of Military Procedure. The Board overturned the convictions of all 28 soldiers who had been found guilty, reinstated honorable discharges, and offered to pay defendants, or their survivors, back pay for their time of incarceration.

Jack & Leslie Hamann
December 14, 2010

INDEX: 1944 COOKE REPORT

Transcripts of Pre-trial Interviews and Interrogations for the US Army Inspector General
September 2, 1944-October 5, 1944

					INTERVIEWER
pages	date	Interviewee	*	unit	
					LT COL CURTIS WILLIAMS / CAPT S.K. TYSON
1-13	09.02	Sgt. Grant Noel Farr	IG	SCU 7909	
14-24	09.02	T/5 Edward S. Haskell	IG	SCU 7909	
					LT COL CURTIS WILLIAMS / CAPT S.K. TYSON
25-32	09.03	Sgt. Augusto Todde	IS	28 ISU	
33-39	09.03	S/Sgt. Fred J. Perata	I	SCU 7909	
					LT COL CURTIS WILLIAMS / CAPT S.K. TYSON
40-47	09.04	Pfc. Harold Mason Gould	I	SCU 7909	
					LT COL CURTIS WILLIAMS / CAPT S.K. TYSON
48-75	09.05	Pvt. Clyde Vernon Lomax	MP	MP Section	
76-89	09.05	S/Sgt. Charles M.[ack] Robinson	MP	MP Section	
90-97	09.05	T/5 Andrew David	MP	MP Section	
					LT COL CURTIS WILLIAMS / CAPT S.K. TYSON
98-112	09.06	S/Sgt Regis A. Callahan	MP	MP Section	
113-114	09.06	Pfc. Floyd W. Powell	MP	MP Section	
115-125	09.06	Pvt. Arthur S. Duncan	MP	MP Section	
126-138	09.06	Sgt. Thurman McCray Jones	MP	MP Section	
139-142	09.06	Pfc. Joseph P. Winderl	MP	MP Section	
143-144	09.06	Cpl. William Edward Rupley	MP	MP Section	
145-151	09.06	Pfc. Gasper S. Devito	MP	MP Section	
152-163	09.06	Pfc. George E. Durel	MP	MP Section	
164-170	09.06	T/4 Carl A. Johnsen	MP	MP Section	
					LT COL CURTIS WILLIAMS / CAPT S.K. TYSON
171-180	09.07	Cpl. John M. Biscan	MP	MP Section	
					LT COL CURTIS WILLIAMS
181-184	09.08	T/5 Andrew David	MP	MP Section	
185-186	09.08	S/Sgt Regis A. Callahan	MP	MP Section	
					LT COL CURTIS WILLIAMS / CAPT S.K. TYSON
187-195	09.09	Pvt. Antonio Pisciotano	IS	28 ISU	
195-199	09.09	Pvt. Nullo Beretta	IS	28 ISU	
200-203	09.09	Cpl. Maj. Guiseppe Belle	IS	28 ISU	
204-207	09.09	Sgt. Angelo Fumarola	IS	28 ISU	
208-211	09.09	Cpl. Maj. Virgilio Manca	IS	28 ISU	
212-215	09.09	Cpl. Mario Ciarlariello	IS	28 ISU	
					LT COL CURTIS WILLIAMS / CAPT S.K. TYSON
216-221	09.11	Cpl. Maj. Rosario Sidoti	IS	28 ISU	
222-225	09.11	Sgt. Maj. Antonio Urbano	IS	28 ISU	
226-228	09.11	Cpl. Maj. Stelvio Federici	IS	28 ISU	
229-231	09.11	Sgt. Pasquale Solombrino	IS	28 ISU	
232-235	09.11	Cpl. Livio Petriccione	IS	28 ISU	
236-241	09.11	Cpl. Maj. Vittorio Bellieni	IS	28 ISU	

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242-245	09.11	Pvt. Imo Nolgi	IS	28 ISU
246-247	09.11	Cpl. Benedetto Marino	IS	28 ISU
248-253	09.11	Pvt. Gennaro Iodice	IS	28 ISU
302-305	09.11	Sgt. Antonio Licciardelli	IS	28 ISU
306-310	09.11	Pvt. Nicola Corea	IS	28 ISU
311-313	09.11	Capt. Ernesto [John] Cellentani	IS	28 ISU
314-318	09.11	Cpl. Maj. Rino Ferrante	IS	28 ISU
319-321	09.11	Pvt. Fernando Catenaro	IS	28 ISU

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254-255	09.12	Sgt. Maj. Ruggero Sarcina	IS	28 ISU
256-257	09.12	Pvt. Bortolo Bertoli	IS	28 ISU
258-259	09.12	Cpl. Maj. Luigi Furlanelli	IS	28 ISU
260-261	09.12	Pvt. Attilio Vencato	IS	28 ISU
262-263	09.12	Pvt. Guiseppe Mariani	IS	28 ISU
264-265	09.12	Pvt. Angelo Facchini	IS	28 ISU
266-268	09.12	Sgt. Maj. Gaetano Pagliaminuta	IS	28 ISU
269-271	09.12	Pvt. Guiseppe Magnasco	IS	28 ISU
272-274	09.12	Cpl. Elso Regondi	IS	28 ISU
275-276	09.12	Cpl. Maj. Osvaldo Grossi	IS	28 ISU
322	09.12	Cpl. Maj. Stelvio Federici	IS	28 ISU
323	09.12	Cpl. Maj. Rino Ferrante	IS	28 ISU
324-325	09.12	T/5 Edward S. Haskell	IG	SCU 7909
326-328	09.12	Sgt. Grant Noel Farr	IG	SCU 7909

LT COL CURTIS WILLIAMS / CAPT S.K. TYSON

277-282	09.13	Sgt. Guiseppe Pulvino	IS	28 ISU
283-289	09.13	Sgt. Mario Marcelli	IS	28 ISU
290-291	09.13	Pvt. Rosario Scalia	IS	28 ISU
292-295	09.13	Pvt. Ego Fugazzo	IS	28 ISU
296-297	09.13	Pvt. Nicola Corea	IS	28 ISU
298-301	09.13	Pvt. Primo Bernabovi	IS	28 ISU

LT COL CURTIS WILLIAMS / CAPT S.K. TYSON

329-355	09.14	Pfc. John H. Pinkney	BS	650 PC
356-377	09.14	Pfc. Roy L. Montgomery	D	651 PC
378-393	09.14	Pvt. Roy Daymond	BS	650 PC

BRIG GEN ELLIOT D. COOKE / LT COL CURTIS WILLIAMS

394-398	09.16	Capt. Charles Majeric	O	578 PC
399-401	09.16	1st Lt. Abraham Rosenberg	O	578 PC
402-406	09.16	2nd Lt. H. V. Sykes	O	578 PC
407-409	09.16	1st Lt. Richard W. Peck	O	578 PC
410-412	09.16	2nd Lt. Delbert F. Bettencourt	O	578 PC
413-417	09.16	1st Lt. Wilburn Fox	O	Service Section
418-425	09.16	S/Sgt. Joe R. Bennett	BS	578 PC
426-442	09.16	1st Sgt. Wilbert E. Tanner	BS	578 PC
443-449	09.16	T/5 Matthew J. McDaniels	BS	578 PC
450-458	09.16	S/Sgt. Harrison A. Berriam	BS	578 PC
459-469	09.16	Sgt. Jack D. Williams	BS	578 PC
470-476	09.16	Cpl. Roger L. Bradley	BS	Service Section

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477-483	09.16	T/4 Orange Lee	BS	578 PC
484-487	09.16	T/4 Elmer S. McGinnis	BS	578 PC
488-491	09.16	T/4 Jesse McCaa	BS	578 PC
492-493	09.16	T/4 John Irving Manuel	BS	578 PC
494-496	09.16	T/4 Orange Lee	BS	578 PC
497	09.16	T/4 Elmer S. McGinnis	BS	578 PC
498-502	09.16	Pvt. Esco Skaggs	WS	Hdqr Detachment
503-513	09.16	Capt. Alan Wayne Christensen	O	Provost Marshal Office
514-516	09.16	Pvt. Gavin F. Fulton	WS	Service Section
517-521	09.16	Pfc. Glenn Pescatore	WS	Hdqr Detachment
522-526	09.16	Capt. James W. Ruel	O	FtL Section 4
527-533	09.16	Capt. Francis W. Beckman	O	28 ISU
534-537	09.16	Capt. Alan Wayne Christensen	O	Provost Marshal Office
538-548	09.16	2nd Lt. James B. Sistrunk	O	Troop Movement §
549-555	09.16	Lt. Col. Leo H. Beckley	O	FtL Staging Area

BRIG GEN ELLIOT D. COOKE / LT COL CURTIS WILLIAMS

556-565	09.17	Pvt. Richard Lee Sutliff	D	650 PC
566-577	09.17	T/5 William "Willie" D. Montgomery	BS	650 PC
578-581	09.17	Pvt. Richard Lee Sutliff	D	650 PC
582-587	09.17	Pvt. Roy Daymond	BS	650 PC
588-591	09.17	Pvt. Jesse Grego	MC	Station Hospital
592-595	09.17	2nd. Lt. Warren D. Beck	O	FtL Staging Area, 4th§
596-615	09.17	Capt. Milton J. Carter	MP	MP Section
616-636	09.17	T/5 Addison G. George	BS	650 PC
637-649	09.17	Pfc. Willie Scott	BS	650 PC
655-664	09.17	Pfc. George E. Durel	MP	MP Section
665-674	09.17	T/4 Carl A. Johnsen	MP	MP Section
678-683	09.17	Capt Jackson O. Heine	MP	749 MP Battalion
684-688	09.17	Ist. Lt. Carl J. Watkins	O	FtL Staging Area

BRIG GEN ELLIOT D. COOKE / LT COL CURTIS WILLIAMS

650-654	09.18	Pfc. John H. Pinkney	BS	650 PC
675-677	09.18	Maj. George H. McNay	O	FtL
689-703	09.18	Maj. Roy Donald Hoisington	O	FtL Staging Area
704	09.18	Ist. Lt. Carl J. Watkins	O	FtL Staging Area
705-719	09.18	Col. Harry Lee Branson	O	FtL Staging Area
720-725	09.18	Col. Vincent P. Hewitt	O	7th Army Air Force Base Unit
726-728	09.18	Capt. Reino J. Panula	O	FtL
729-733	09.18	Lt. Col. Leo H. Beckley	O	FtL Staging Area
734-739	09.18	Capt. John Hunt Walker	MC	X-Ray & Pathologist
740-743	09.18	Col. Alfred L. Baylies	O	FtL Command Group
744-747	09.18	Maj. Jesse L. Haire	O	FtL Staging Area §3

BRIG GEN ELLIOT D. COOKE / LT COL CURTIS WILLIAMS

748-753	09.19	Capt. Charles Oliver Sturdevant	O	Neuropsychiatric §
754-771	09.19	Maj. William Walter Orem	O	FtL Staging Area
772-774	09.19	Pfc. Albert A. DiGiacomo	I	SCU 7909
775-779	09.19	Col. Alfred L. Baylies	O	FtL Command Group

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780	09.19	Pfc. George E. Durel	MP	MP Section
781-786	09.19	Col. Frederick Weldon Teague	O	POE
787-795	09.19	Lt. Col. Henry Jay Kleinhenn	O	Port of Embarkation
796-804	09.19	Sgt. Augusto Todde	IS	28 ISU
805-809	09.19	Lt. Col. Anthony Frank Stecher	CM	POE Troop Movement
810-814	09.19	Capt. S. K. Tyson	O	POE
815-823	09.19	Maj. Irving R. Crawford	O	POE Intell & Security
824-831	09.19	Maj. Robert H. Manchester	O	POE Intell & Security
BRIG GEN ELLIOT D. COOKE / LT COL CURTIS WILLIAMS				
832-838	09.20	Brig. Gen. Eley Parker Denson	O	Port of Embarkation
839-840	09.20	Capt. Charles Majeric	O	578 PC
841-846	09.20	1st Sgt. Wilbert E. Tanner	BS	578 PC
847-851	09.20	S/Sgt. Joe R. Bennett	BS	578 PC
852-855	09.20	T/5 Matthew J. McDaniels	BS	578 PC
856-873	09.20	T/4 John S. Brown, Sr.	D	578 PC
874-882	09.20	T/5 Earl William Lallis	BS	578 PC
LT COL CURTIS WILLIAMS				
883-928	09.25	T/5 Willie Ellis	BS	650 PC
LT COL CURTIS WILLIAMS				
929-950	09.26	Pfc. John H. Pinkney	BS	650 PC
951-967	09.26	Pvt. Alvin E. Clarke	BS	650 PC
968-984	09.26	Pfc. John Lee Hamilton	D	650 PC
985-990	09.26	Pfc. Roy L. Montgomery	D	651 PC
991-998	09.26	Pfc. John Lee Hamilton	D	650 PC
LT COL CURTIS WILLIAMS				
999-1014	09.27	Pvt. Robert Mathis	BS	651 PC
1015-1020	09.27	Pvt. Roy Daymond	BS	650 PC
1021-1039	09.27	Cpl. Johnnie Ceaser	D	650 PC
1040-1079	09.27	Pvt. Thomas Battle	BS	651 PC
1080-1090	09.27	T/5 Herman Johnson	D	651 PC
1091-1092	09.27	Pvt. Robert Mathis	BS	651 PC
LT COL CURTIS WILLIAMS				
1093-1121	09.28	Pvt. Jesse C. B. Sims	BS	650 PC
1122-1148	09.28	T/5 Willie S. "Slick" Curry	D	651 PC
1149-1163	09.28	Cpl. Joe Trice	BS	651 PC
1164-1165	09.28	T/5 Willie S. "Slick" Curry	D	651 PC
1166-1176	09.28	Pvt. Samuel Snow	D	650 PC
LT COL CURTIS WILLIAMS				
1177-1198	09.29	Pvt. James C. Chandler, Jr.	D	650 PC
1199-1205	09.29	Pvt. Wallace A. Wooden	D	650 PC
1206-1213	09.29	Pvt. George L. Johnson	BS	651 PC
1214-1221	09.29	Pfc. Milton D. Bratton	D	650 PC
1222-1248	09.29	Pvt. William G. Jones	D	650 PC

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1249-1257	09.30	T/4 John S. Brown, Sr.	D	578 PC
1258-1259	09.30	Cpl. Maj. Enzo Antonelli	IS	28 ISU
1260-1262	09.30	Pvt. Willie C. Basden	D	650 PC
1263-1276	09.30	T/5 Willie Prevost, Sr.	D	650 PC
1277-1281	09.30	Pvt. Elva Shelton	D	650 PC
1282-1289	09.30	Pvt. Booker W. Townsell	D	650 PC
1290-1297	09.30	T/5 Addison G. George	BS	650 PC
1298	09.30	T/5 Willie Prevost, Sr.	D	650 PC
1298	09.30	Pvt. Wallace A. Wooden	D	650 PC

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1299-1302	10.02	T/5 Lee A. Dixon	D	650 PC
1303-1304	10.02	T/4 Carl A. Johnsen	MP	MP Section
1305-1313	10.02	T/5 Leslie T. Stewart	D	650 PC
1314-1321	10.02	Pvt. Edward Sanders	BS	650 PC
1322-1327	10.02	Pfc. Samuel Thomas	BS	650 PC
1328-1331	10.02	Pfc. Arthur Williams	D	650 PC
1332-1341	10.02	T/5 Johnnie Mack Sanders	BS	650 PC
1342-1347	10.02	T/5 Herman Lee "Red" Redley	BS	651 PC
1348-1355	10.02	Pvt. Herman L. Gentry	BS	650 PC
1356-1364	10.02	Pvt. Jefferson Dean Green	D	650 PC

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1365-1368	10.03	Pfc. Walter Ruffen	BS	650 PC
1369-1370	10.03	Pfc. Willie Scott	BS	650 PC
1371-1377	10.03	Pfc. Aguinaldo Thomas	BS	650 PC
1378-1384	10.03	Pvt. John R. Brown	D	651 PC
1385	10.03	Pvt. Wallace A. Wooden	D	650 PC
1386-1388	10.03	Pvt. Willis C. Collins	BS	650 PC
1389-1395	10.03	Sgt. Fletcher Carter	BS	650 PC
1396-1399	10.03	Sgt. Theodore T. Davis	BS	650 PC
1400-1402	10.03	Pvt. J. D. Horton	BS	650 PC
1403-1406	10.03	Sgt. Ellery Mitchell	BS	650 PC
1407-1409	10.03	Cpl. L.C. Clark	BS	650 PC
1410-1413	10.03	Cpl. Emmett Lillard	BS	651 PC
1414-1422	10.03	T/5 Harvey Banks	BS	650 PC
1423-1427	10.03	Pfc. Elmer Briscoe	BS	650 PC
1428-1433	10.03	Pvt. Robert Frazier	BS	650 PC
1434-1436	10.03	Pvt. Ernest Martin	BS	650 PC
1437-1447	10.03	T/5 William A. Cunningham	BS	650 PC
1448-1452	10.03	Pvt. Thorton E. Robbins	BS	651 PC
1453-1455	10.03	Pvt. Arthaniel Warren	BS	650 PC
1456-1460	10.03	Pfc. Otis Baker	BS	651 PC
1461-1464	10.03	Pfc. Jack Chapman	BS	651 PC
1465-1472	10.03	T/5 Henry Jupiter	D	650 PC
1473-1477	10.03	Pfc. Joseph Scott	BS	651 PC
1478-1479	10.03	Pvt. Robert Mathis	BS	651 PC

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1480-1484	10.04	Pvt. Walter Jackson	D	650 PC
1485-1489	10.04	Pvt. Freddie Calvert	BS	650 PC
1490-1498	10.04	Pvt. Levert Williams	BS	650 PC
1499-1505	10.04	Pvt. William G. Jones	D	650 PC
1506-1507	10.05	S/Sgt Regis A. Callahan	MP	MP Section
1508-1512	10.05	Pvt. Robert Smith	BS	650 PC

*Interviewee designations:

BS	US Army black soldier, not an eventual court-martial defendant
D	US Army black soldier, eventually a court-martial defendant
I	US Army soldier assigned to act as interpreter with Italian Service Unit
IG	US Army soldier assigned to guard Italian Service Unit
IS	Italian Soldier
MC	US Army soldier assigned to medical corps
MP	US Army military policeman
O	US Army officer
WS	US Army white soldier

WAR DEPARTMENT
Office of The Inspector General
Washington

EDC:mg

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5 October 1944.

333.9-Fort Lawton, Wash. (6)

MEMORANDUM for the Commanding General, Army Service Forces, THRU: Deputy Chief of Staff, U.S. Army

Subject: Investigation of attack on Italian Service Unit personnel by American Soldiers at Fort Lawton, Washington.

1. In compliance with a directive from the Deputy Chief of Staff, and as part of a major inquiry pertaining to the use of Italian Service Units within the United States, an investigation regarding the attack on Italian Service Unit personnel by American soldiers at Fort Lawton, Washington, on or about 14 August 1944, is now being conducted by Lt. Colonel Curtis L. Williams, IGD, and other inspectors general, both from this office and from the staff of the Commanding General, Seattle Port of Embarkation. Pursuant to an oral request of the Commanding General, Army Service Forces, submitted through the Commanding General, Transportation Corps, that part of the investigation at Fort Lawton pertaining to command responsibilities was supervised by a general officer of this office, namely: Brigadier General Elliot D. Cooke. Regarding the command responsibilities in connection with the disturbance in question, General Cooke reports as follows:

a. The investigation of an attack upon Italian Service Unit personnel at Fort Lawton, Washington, is still in progress and will not be fully completed until certain of the participants have been returned from overseas for interrogation by the investigating officers. However, that part of the investigation pertaining to command responsibilities has been completed. While the actual testimony bearing upon these matters is omitted from this report in order that it may be incorporated in the final and complete report of investigation, the facts submitted herewith have, nevertheless, been established beyond a reasonable doubt. These facts will be presented hereinafter in the order in which the events to which they pertain took place.

b. On 14 August 1944, there were quartered in the 600 and 700 blocks of the Fourth Section area at Fort Lawton, Washington, the 650th, 651st and 578th Port Companies and a Post Service Company, all colored, together with the 28th Italian Quartermaster Service Company. These units were quartered as shown in Tab A. The 650th and 651st Port Companies were scheduled to depart for an overseas destination at about 1900 on the following day, (15 August 1944). In the 800 block of the Fort Lawton Staging Area, at this time was quartered Company A of the 749th MP Battalion.

c. At the end of the work day, approximately 1700, on 14 August 1944, all officers of the foregoing organizations left the areas occupied by these units and proceeded to their quarters, either on the post, about one mile distant, or in the City of Seattle, about 7 miles away. Posted in

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the area was one officer (of the permanent personnel), a Captain Alan W. Christensen, whose duty it was to remain in the Fourth Section area during the night 14-15 August. The Fourth Section area was comprised of the 600, 700 and 800 blocks. Captain Christensen's post was at headquarters of the Fourth Section, which was in Building 830 (See Tab A). Also on duty in the Fourth Section area was one NCO in charge of quarters for each company, and a fireguard in each of the 600, 700 and 800 blocks. In addition, an MP patrol from the guardhouse was scheduled to tour the area in a jeep at hourly intervals. On this night (14-15 August 1944), the Commanding General of the Seattle Port of Embarkation, Brigadier General Eley P. Denson, was in Spokane, Washington, on official duties not connected with the port of embarkation. Colonel Harry L. Branson, TC, was acting as Port Commander in addition to his duties as Commanding Officer, Fort Lawton, Washington.

d. At about 2130 or 2145 on 14 August, Captain Alan W. Christensen, duty officer for the Fourth Section, was making a tour through the section for which he was responsible, and ascertained that PX 3 (Building 723), which was patronized by white and colored American soldiers and by members of the 28th Italian Quartermaster Service Company, was in the process of being closed for the night. Captain Christensen then went to the recreation hall (Building 701) where he observed several groups of colored soldiers playing cards. After making this observation he went to the mess hall occupied by the 578th Port Company, TC (Building 700). There he observed an unauthorized party in progress, under the supervision of 1st Sergeant Tanner, of the 578th Port Company. Captain Christensen took no exception to this unauthorized social gathering but proceeded to the 800 block and, after inspecting that area, entered the headquarters of the Fourth Section (Building 830) at about 2230. Captain Christensen testified under oath that he went to sleep in Building 830 at about 2300, and remained asleep for the rest of the night. The enlisted man on duty as Charge of Quarters in Building 830 likewise testified under oath that he had occasion to look for Captain Christensen at about 2400 and that Captain Christensen was not in the building, however, the whereabouts of Captain Christensen is not material to the issue, since no information was received at the headquarters of the Fourth Section regarding the disturbance in question and Captain Christensen did not know that such a disturbance had taken place until the following morning.

e. At about 2300, Private William D. Montgomery of the 650th Port Company, accompanied by two other colored soldiers, walked up a road in the vicinity of the mess hall (Building 700), where the unauthorized party had been held. Private Montgomery had attended that party for a short time and had been given some beer in that building. The three colored soldiers, while proceeding toward their own barracks in the 600 block, passed three Italians going in the opposite direction on Lawton Road (Tab A). Private Montgomery shouted to the Italians to stop their noise. One of the Italians spoke to his companions, whereupon Private Montgomery turned and ran toward them, holding his hand in the air as though brandishing a knife. Two of the

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Italians ran, but one stood his ground and, when Montgomery came close, struck him on the jaw and knocked him to the ground, unconscious. The Italian then ran, with Montgomery's two companions following him and throwing rocks. When the three Italians reached their own area, the two colored soldiers ceased their pursuit, picked up Montgomery, carried him back to Virginia Avenue (Tab A) and laid him on the sidewalk in front of Building 719, which building was occupied by a part of the 650th Port Company. The two soldiers then ran into various buildings, inciting other soldiers to come out and avenge an assault upon one of their comrades.

f. At about 2305, an MP patrol from the post guardhouse, consisting of Staff Sgt. Charles M. Robinson and Private Clyde V. Lomax, riding in a jeep, arrived in the vicinity of the intersection of Lawton Road and Virginia Avenue (Tab A), and saw a large number of colored soldiers surrounding another colored soldier lying on the ground (Montgomery). The colored soldiers were very excited and told the MP's that they did not need any help but would handle the situation in their own way. After some argument, Sgt. Robinson and Pvt. Lomax were permitted to load Montgomery into the jeep for the purpose of transporting him to a hospital. As these MP's departed with Montgomery they saw the colored soldiers tearing up a fence around the mess hall (Building 700), and otherwise arming themselves with sticks, stones, and clubs.

g. In taking Montgomery to a hospital, Sergeant Robinson and Private Lomax passed within 100 yards of the guardhouse but they did not stop nor enter the guardhouse for the purpose of warning the Sergeant of the Guard or anyone else of the seriousness of the situation in the Fourth Section area. Instead, these two MP's not only proceeded first to a hospital, but they also chose that hospital most distant from the scene of the disturbance. Furthermore, Sergeant Robinson and Private Lomax remained at the hospital for several minutes in close proximity to a telephone, but failed to notify anyone in authority of what had taken place. It was only after these two MP's had spent some time in the hospital that they returned to the guardhouse and, without having secured any further information than initially obtained, notified the Sergeant of the Guard that there was trouble in the Italian area and that some MP's had better be sent down there to take care of it.

h. Shortly after Sergeant Robinson and Private Lomax departed with Private Montgomery, members of the 650th and 651st Port Companies and probably some members of the 578th Port Company attacked members of the 28th Italian Quartermaster Service Company. Those Italians found outside of barracks were pelted with rocks and beaten with clubs. One of them was thrown bodily off of a 20 foot cliff. Many of the Italians ran and hid in the dense woods just north of their own area. The colored soldiers also attacked Barracks 708 and 709, breaking all windows with rocks and clubs. They also forced entry into one of the barracks and assaulted the Italians

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therein with rocks, clubs, knives and other dangerous weapons. It was during this part of the riot that one Italian, Guglielmo Olivotto, jumped out of a barracks window in an attempt to escape. He was immediately seized upon by five colored soldiers and was last seen being dragged toward the woods. When the attack first started, a considerable number of Italians ran to their Company Orderly Room (Building 713), in the belief and hope that they would be protected by American personnel quartered in that building. Sergeant Grant N. Farr, a white American soldier, on duty with the 28th Italian Quartermaster Service Company, caused the doors of the Orderly Room to be closed and barricaded. He then, according to his own testimony, called by telephone and informed the Corporal of the Guard, Corporal Andrew David, that a riot was in progress, and requested help. No record of incoming calls was kept by Corporal David, and both he and a Sergeant of the Guard, Staff Sergeant Regis A. Callaghan, are somewhat vague as to whether or not Sergeant Farr's message was ever received. Sergeant Farr was unable to make further calls on the telephone because the Orderly Room was soon being attacked by the colored soldiers. Clubs and stones were used to break in the windows and a heavy two-edge ax was utilized to demolish the doors. The colored soldiers gained entry and immediately began clubbing and beating everyone inside the building. Despite the fact that Sergeant Farr tried to prevent them and announced that he was an American soldier, he was beaten on the head, stabbed in the shoulder and cut across the groin with a knife and rendered unconscious. All of the Italians were clubbed and beaten until most of them were also unconscious. Many of them were seriously injured and one of them, still unconscious at the time of this investigation, perhaps fatally.

i. When Sergeant Robinson and Private Lomax finally reached the guardhouse and reported that they had seen in the Fourth Section area, Sergeant Callaghan dispatched Sergeant Therman M. Jones and three other MP's to investigate. No attempt was made to notify Captain Christensen of the disturbance that appeared to be taking place in the Fourth Section area. Sergeant Jones and his party left the guardhouse and proceeded directly to the Italian area. There they observed what was taking place in and about the Orderly Room (Building 713) and entered that building. As they reached the door one colored soldier attempted to strike Sergeant Jones with a club but missed and hit one of the other MP's. At about this time, Sergeant Jones was joined by Private John H. Pinckney of the 650th Port Company. This colored soldier had somewhere obtained an MP arm band and a club and was doing his utmost to subdue the rioters and get them to return to their barracks. After about 10 or 15 minutes, and with Pinckney's assistance, Sergeant Jones was able to prevent further violence in the Orderly Room and to finally disperse the rioters in that area. He then sent one man to call for an ambulance and made other preparations for evacuating the wounded.

j. As soon as Sergeant Callaghan had sent Sergeant Jones and party to the Italian area, Callaghan called the MP barracks by telephone and caused all available MP's therein to be alerted. Immediately thereafter, Callaghan received a telephone call from 1st Sergeant Robert B. Aubry of

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the 650th Port Company, who stated that there was serious trouble between the men of his Company and the Italian prisoners. Callaghan then called Post Headquarters in search of the Officer of the Day, one 2nd Lieut. James B. Sistrunk. Sergeant Callaghan was informed that Lieut. Sistrunk had left for the Officers Club, the closing of which was his duty to supervise at midnight. Leaving word for the Officer of the Day to come as soon as possible, Sergeant Callaghan, accompanied by Corporal John M. Biscan, then went in a car to the 700 Block area. Arriving on Virginia Avenue, Sergeant Callaghan realized at once the serious proportions to which the riot had grown and ordered Corporal Biscan to return to the MP barracks and bring all available MP's to the scene as quickly as possible. Sergeant Callaghan then walked directly to the Italian area where he found a group of colored soldiers still trying to break in the door of one of the barracks. Callaghan forced his way through these men, placed himself between them and the door, drew his pistol and threatened to shoot the first man who moved toward him. Callaghan was still guarding this barracks building when additional MP's arrived on the scene and began getting the situation under control.

k. The Officer of the Day, Lieut. Sistrunk, arrived in the Italian area after the riot had been quelled. He found Sergeant Callaghan posting sentries around the area and observed most of the colored soldiers returning to or entering their own barracks. Lieut. Sistrunk returned to the guardhouse and shortly after 2400 called Major William W. Orem, who was Provost Marshal and Security Officer, and informed him of what had taken place. Lieut. Sistrunk took no further action regarding this affair. In fact, Lieut. Sistrunk stated in testimony that he had never received any instruction in the duties of an Officer of the Day and did not know of anything else he could have done regarding the disturbance.

1. The Provost Marshal, Major Orem, reached the guardhouse at about 0030 (15 August) and from there proceeded to the Italian area. Major Orem concerned himself principally with seeing that sentries were placed around the area and that the colored soldiers returned to their barracks. Thereafter, Major Orem inspected the barracks and had the lights turned off, but he did not require any bed check made, nor attempt in any way to ascertain who of the soldiers had participated in the riot, or who showed evidence of having participated or who possessed weapons of a dangerous character. An effort was made, under the supervision of an Italian captain to determine whether or not any Italians were missing, but this check was never satisfactorily completed because of the number of Italians in the hospitals and still in hiding outside the area. At about 0130 Major Orem called the Post Commander, Colonel Harry L. Branson, at his quarters on the post and informed him that there had been a fight between the colored soldiers and the Italians, but just what was said during this telephonic conversation cannot be stated factually. Colonel Branson testified that Major Orem did not indicate the extent nor seriousness of the riot which had occurred, nor even the number of persons injured, but did offer assurance that everything was under control.

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Major Orem, on the other hand, admits that he told Colonel Branson everything was under control, but also testified that he informed Colonel Branson of the number of injured persons and, by implication at least, of the seriousness of the affair. Regardless of what was said, Colonel Branson did not that night go to the scene of the riot, nor did he issue any orders looking toward the identification or the apprehension of those responsible for the disturbance.

m. At about 0530 (15 August) Privates Lomax and Pinckney, patrolling in a jeep on a road some 300 or 400 yards north of the Italian area, saw in the woods, some 50 yards off the road, the body of Guglielmo Olivotto suspended by the neck on a rope attached to the lower end of three steel cables stretched across a deep ravine (these cables were a part of an obstacle course). Notification of this discovery was communicated to the Provost Marshal, Major Orem, who came at once to the scene of the hanging, secured the services of a medical officer (Captain Swardloff), caused the body to be removed and taken to the hospital for an autopsy. No photographs were taken of the body at the scene of the hanging. However, subsequent testimony taken by officers conducting this investigation established the following:

(1) From where he was hanging, Olivotto's feet were approximately $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet above ground level.

(2) The place on the steel cable where the rope was tied was beyond reach of an even taller man than Olivotto, and could only have been secured there by someone who had walked out upon the cable.

(3) The vertebrae in Olivotto's neck were neither displaced nor broken.

(4) The autopsy performed by Captain John H. Walker established the fact that Olivotto had died from strangulation.

In the opinion of medical officers, as well as officers conducting this investigation, the foregoing facts preclude the possibility of Olivotto's having committed suicide.

n. The discovery of Olivotto's body, and the actions taken immediately following this discovery, were communicated to the Post Commander, Colonel Branson. Shortly thereafter, Colonel Branson proceeded to the Italian area and caused to be assembled the following officers:

1. Colonel Frederick W. Teague, Chief of Staff,
2. Seattle Port of Embarkation.
3. Lt. Col. Henry J. Kleinhen, Inspector General, SPE.
3. Colonel Alfred L. Baylies, Officer in charge of the command group, Fort Lawton, Washington.
4. Lt. Col. Leo H. Beckley, Director of Operations, Ft. Lawton.
5. Major Wm. W. Orem, Provost Marshal, Ft. Lawton.
6. Major George H. McNay, Post Engineer, Ft. Lawton.

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To these several officers, Col. Branson issued orders and instructions substantially as follows:

(1) That the time of departure by train of the 650th and 651st Port Companies (destined for the SFPE) would be advanced from 1900 to 1300 that day.

(2) That a member of the Inspector General's Department would accompany these two units, and while on the train discover and apprehend those guilty of participating in the riot of the previous night.

(3) That Col. Alfred L. Baylies was appointed security officer of the Fort Lawton Staging Area, and that Col. Baylies would insure that the colored troops were moved from proximity of the Italians as expeditiously as possible.

(4) That no troops would utilize the obstacle course, nor enter the area where Olivotto's body had been found until after a thorough investigation of that area had been completed by criminal investigators.

(5) That the Post Engineer would at once cause the repair of damage done to barracks of the Italian Service Unit.

(6) That an investigation of the whole affair would be initiated by the Inspector General, Seattle Port of Embarkation.

c. Colonel Branson's instructions were acted upon in the following manner:

(1) Colonel Teague returned to Headquarters, Seattle Port of Embarkation, and, mistrusting Colonel Branson's judgment in wishing to speed the departure of the colored troops before an investigation could be held, informed the War Department of what had taken place, and obtained a 72 hour delay in the departure of the 650th and 651st Port Companies. Colonel Teague then called General Denson in Spokane, and apprised him of the situation. General Denson approved the actions of Colonel Teague, and at once started for Seattle by automobile.

(2) Colonel Baylies caused the 650th, 651st and 578th Port Companies to be moved to areas as far distant from the Italians as facilities permitted. In the process of this move, Colonel Baylies observed many of the colored soldiers wearing sheath knives. As a security measure, Colonel Baylies caused all the colored soldiers to be searched for weapons, and their knives were taken from them. However, no record was kept of whom the knives were taken from and, therefore, when one of these knives was subsequently found to have human blood on its blade, no one could identify the owner.

(3) Lieut. Colonel Beckley, at officer's call on the morning

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of 15 August, informed all officers of the Operations Division that troops would not utilize the obstacle course, nor enter the area in the vicinity of the obstacle course, until further orders. Despite this warning, troops did enter the area, both on the 15th and 16th of August, before investigators could properly search the area for foot prints and other evidence which might have assisted in determining the persons who had participated in the hanging of Olivotto.

(4) The Post Engineer, Major McNayk sent 15 or 20 men into the Italian area to repair the barracks, as directed by the Post Commander. In accomplishing these repairs the workmen, perforce, obliterated all finger prints, et cetera, which might have offered conclusive evidence regarding certain of the participants in the riot. Also, the rocks, clubs and other weapons utilized by the rioters, on some of which was evidence of human blood, were gathered up without regard to the possibility of their being examined for finger prints.

(5) The Inspector General, Seattle Port of Embarkation, and two enlisted criminal investigators from the Provost Marshal's office, started investigating the riot, each investigation being conducted independent of the other.

p. During the afternoon of 15 August 1944, Colonel Teague, Chief of Staff, Seattle Port of Embarkation, in the presence of Colonel Branson, relieved Lieut. Colonel Kleinhen, IGD, from the duty of investigating the riot, and assigned this duty to the Director of Intelligence and Internal Security, Seattle Port of Embarkation, who, at that time, was Major I.R. Crawford. This was done at the instigation of Major Crawford, who maintained that the investigation of the Inspector General was interfering with the criminal investigation undertaken by his subordinates. At about 2200 on 15 August, General Denson reached Seattle and resumed command of the Port of Embarkation. On 16 August, General Denson directed that Captain S.K. Tyson, IGD, should act as liaison officer with the investigating officers. Subsequently, and in order to clarify the scope and responsibility of the investigators, General Denson published written orders to the effect that the Director of Intelligence would conduct that part of the investigation relating to the criminal side of the riot, and that the Inspector General would conduct that part of the investigation not related with criminal acts. Two days after these orders had been published, Lt. Colonel Curtis L. Williams, IGD, from the Office of The Inspector General, arrived in Seattle and, under proper War Department directives, took over the entire investigation, utilizing, however, the services of those officers who had been conducting the investigation prior to his arrival.

q. In addition to the investigation directed by General Denson, the Post Commander, Colonel Branson, appointed a board of officers to investigate the circumstances surrounding the riot, determine the cause and fix responsibility for property damage. In a rather brief report, this board found the 650th and 651st Port Companies responsible for the damage done to

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the various buildings, and recommended that the cost of repairs be collected from members of those two organizations, without having determined just which members had participated in the disturbance.

r. When, on 15 August, authorities at the San Francisco Port of Embarkation were informed of the 72 hours delay in shipment of the two port companies involved in the riot, an entirely new call date of 31 August 1944 was issued. This date was subsequently changed by the War Department to 25 August, and the troops left Seattle on 23 August 1944. They departed overseas before the investigating officers had discovered the names of all those who had participated in the riot, and, consequently, some of these soldiers are now being returned to this country for interrogation and probable court-martial.

s. DISCUSSION.

(1) Had the post authorities and their subordinates at Fort Lawton displayed better judgment and force, there seems little doubt that the riot at Fort Lawton could have been prevented, or at least brought under control in time to forestall the hanging of Olivotto. A scrutiny of Tab A will show that the 28th Italian Service Unit was in an area immediately adjacent to and, for the most part, surrounded by areas wherein colored troops were quartered. Furthermore, because of the woods north of the Italian area, the Italians had to pass through the colored area while going to and from work. Since the colored soldiers had, prior to the riot, manifested a dislike for the Italians, which dislike was in the process of being fostered by many newspapers throughout the country, the placing of these two types of personnel so close together clearly indicates a lack of judgment, or a failure to appreciate the latent hostility with which many civilians and certain of our military personnel view these Italian prisoners.

(2) The fact that not a single officer belonging to any of the units involved in the riot was on duty the night of 14-15 August, despite the fact that two of these organizations were leaving for an overseas destination the following day, certainly reflects a laxity in command supervision and control.

(3) The conduct of the two MP's who first saw the riot forming, yet failed to take immediate steps toward the quelling of that disturbance, reflects, if not cowardice, a decided lack of proper training and also a flagrant disregard of the Articles of War. Despite this fact, neither of these two men were censured nor punished in any way.

(4) The fact that the only officer on duty in the area where the riot occurred (Captain Christensen) was either absent from his post or asleep at the time of the disturbance, appears to have been of little concern to his immediate superiors. His whereabouts and actions on the night of the

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riot were not inquired into, and he subsequently became one of three members of a Board of Officers appointed to investigate the affair and to fix responsibility for its occurrence.

(5) The actions of Sergeant Jones and the MP's who accompanied him to the scene of the riot, and the quelling of that riot in and around the Orderly Room are deemed commendable. Nevertheless, none of those MP's could or would identify a single colored soldier as having participated in the riot, although Sergeant Jones and his companions were in a fully lighted orderly room for from 15 to 20 minutes with a large number of the rioters. This failure to identify the offenders is hardly understandable, since Private Pinckney, the colored soldier who voluntarily assisted in quelling the riot, as well as most of the Italians who were attacked, identified many of the participants. Because of this, the investigating officers cannot help but believe that the MP's had, for some undetermined reason, agreed amongst themselves not to identify any of the rioters.

(6) Failure on the part of officers first called to the scene of the riot to take immediate steps toward the identification of those participating in the disturbance rendered the subsequent detection of those individuals more difficult, and may even result in some of the culprits escaping justice.

(7) Factors attributed to the post commander which also may be considered as contributing to the difficulty of administering justice, are:

(a) His failure to immediately determine the proportions and seriousness of the disturbance which took place the night of 14-15 August.

(b) Permitting all physical evidence, such as finger prints, foot prints, et cetera, to be obliterated, both in the area where the riot occurred and in the area where the body of Olivotto was discovered.

(c) Hastening, or attempting to hasten, the departure of those troops involved in the riot before those persons guilty of criminal acts could be found and identified.

(d) Failure to personally ascertain the degree to which some members of his own command were partially responsible for the extent to which the riot developed, with a view to initiating disciplinary action.

(8) In justice to Colonel Branson and his subordinates, it must be stated that their entire efforts in this affair were concentrated on preventing a recurrence or spreading of the emotional unrest between races as manifested by the riot in question. In this, those officers were successful. However, their actions indicated a decided lack of appreciation regarding the seriousness of the offenses committed against law and order, and of the necessity of bringing to justice those persons responsible for the acts perpetrated.

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2. REMARKS OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL.

The foregoing report is submitted in compliance with an oral request of The Commanding General, Army Service Forces, as presented by the office of The Commanding General, Transportation Corps. In support of this memorandum, a more detailed report of investigation, with attached testimony, will be prepared and submitted when interrogation of the witnesses now available has been completed. Since certain phases of this investigation are still in progress, conclusions and recommendations in the premises are not deemed propitious at this time. The full report of investigation is expected to be completed in the near future.

By *Philip E. Brown*
9 Oct 44 *epc*
PHILIP E. BROWN,
Brigadier General, U. S. Army,
Deputy The Inspector General.

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W. Lewis NARS, 12/22/81

WAR DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL
WASHINGTON

14 October 1944.

WDSIG 333.9-Fort Lawton, Wash. (6)

MEMORANDUM for the Deputy Chief of Staff.

Subject: Liberalized treatment of Italian Prisoners of War, and an
Attack upon Italian Service Unit Personnel by American Soldiers.

1. Pursuant to instructions of the Deputy Chief of Staff, dated 22 August 1944 (Tab A), directing that an inquiry be carried out as requested by the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-1, regarding the liberalized treatment of personnel of Italian Service Units and an attack upon Italian Service Unit personnel by American soldiers, such inquiry was conducted during the period 24 August - 3 October 1944 by Brigadier General Elliot D. Cooke, assisted by Colonel Ralph G. Bing, IGD, Lieut. Colonel Curtis L. Williams, IGD, and Major Willard A. Woodyard, IGD, all of this office. In addition to, and in conjunction with, the inquiry directed by the Deputy Chief of Staff, a detailed investigation of the attack upon members of the 28th Italian Quartermaster Service Unit at Fort Lawton, Washington, was undertaken upon request of The Commanding General, Army Service Forces. This detailed investigation has not yet been completed, but an interim report concerning the command responsibilities involved in that affair has been submitted to The Commanding General, Army Service Forces, and a copy furnished the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-1. The broader inquiry, as directed by the Deputy Chief of Staff, has been fully completed, regarding which General Cooke reports as follows:

a. The directive under which this inquiry was conducted specified that a thorough investigation would be made, both of the general situation regarding the liberalized treatment of personnel of Italian Service Units and of the particular incident at Fort Lawton, Washington, where American soldiers attacked personnel of an Italian Service Unit. This inquiry was conducted in order to:

(1) Establish authoritatively the data as to the contribution which Italian Service Units are making to this country's war effort;

(2) Establish the justification for a policy of liberalized treatment of the personnel of these units and recommend any necessary changes and improvement in its execution;

(3) To ascertain the cause for the incident at Fort Lawton, Washington, including the extent to which public criticism regarding the "pampering" and "coddling" of Italian personnel may have been responsible therefor; and

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(4) To recommend ways and means to prevent further untoward incidents and overcome any adverse public attitude.

For the purpose of continuity and clarity, each of the foregoing requirements will be presented hereinafter under a separate heading.

b. Contribution by Italian Service Units to this Country's War Effort.

(1) There were, at the time of this survey, approximately 35,000 Italian prisoners of war in Service Units within the continental limits of the United States. Of these, about 10,000 were working for the Transportation Corps, mostly in or about ports of embarkation; 7,000 were being utilized in ordnance depots or arsenals; and some 18,000 were distributed amongst the nine service commands, performing various types of duty. At the majority of installations where Italians are being used, civilian labor in the quantities needed is not available. This is particularly true at ports, depots and arsenals. However, it has been agreed upon between the military authorities, at these installations, and various labor unions that, at any time, a qualified civilian can be found or applies for work, he will immediately be employed in place of a prisoner of war or even a soldier. This policy has been strictly adhered to by the Army.

(2) A detailed break-down of the various types of work being performed by the 10,000 Italians in service units serving with the Transportation Corps is shown on Tab B. The degree to which these different duties may have contributed to the war effort might be subject to considerable debate; however, the officers conducting this inquiry, after observing many thousands of Italian prisoners of war at work and considering the type and value of work performed, arrived at a common method of evaluating the relationship of results attained as applied to military essentials. By this method it was determined that, of the 9,588 Italians serving with the Transportation Corps, 4,145, or 43.3%, are performing duties which contribute directly to the war effort; 4,259, or 44.4%, are performing duties which contribute indirectly to the war effort; and 1,184, or 12.3%, are performing duties which are for the convenience and comfort of military personnel at the installations where these Italians are serving.

(3) A detailed break-down of the duties being performed by Italian Service Units serving with the Ordnance Department is shown in Tab C. By applying the same method of evaluation to the 6,811 Italians working for the Ordnance Department as was done in the case of those working for the Transportation Corps, it was decided that 3,257, or 48%, were contributing directly to the war effort; 2,666, or 39%, indirectly; and 888, or 13%, for convenience and comfort.

(4) The officers conducting this survey did not ascertain the exact duties being performed by all of the remaining Italian Service Units

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throughout the nine service commands. However, an appreciable sample (Tab D) was taken in various service commands, and this sampling reflected that, of 5,288 individual Italians observed, 3,944 were in training. Any aid to the war effort contributed by those in training was coincidental to the training mission assigned. Of the remaining 1,344 observed, 613, or 45.8%, were contributing directly to the war effort; 618, or 46%, indirectly; and 109, or 8.2%, were being utilized for convenience and comfort.

(5) By adding the sum total of the above groups, and arriving at overall percentages, an average ratio was established as shown on Tab E. By applying these ratios to the entire 35,000 Italians now in service units, and disregarding those in training, since such training has been discontinued, the officers conducting this inquiry have concluded that 15,820, or 45.2%, of the Italians are performing duties which contribute directly to the war effort; 14,875, or 42.5%, are performing duties which indirectly contribute to the war effort; and 4,305, or 12.3%, are contributing merely to the convenience of personnel in the military establishment.

(6) The amount of work accomplished per man per day was found to be another controversial question regarding personnel of the Italian Service Units. Opinions pertaining to their accomplishments differed considerably at various installations; this difference of opinion depending, among other things, upon the type of work being performed, the disposition of the surrounding populace, and the availability of civilian labor. It was found at many places where Italian Service Units were located, that the limited civilian labor available was sub-marginal in productivity as well as undependable, thus making the Italians appear very favorable in comparison. Likewise, it was found that the output of the Italians is affected by the liberties accorded them and the supervision rendered by American officers, both of which varied in different locations. In general, however, there were three schools of thought regarding the productivity of the Italians, to-wit:

- (a) That 1 Italian is worth $1\frac{1}{2}$ soldiers or 2 civilians.
- (b) That 1 Italian is worth 1 soldier or $1\frac{1}{2}$ civilians.
- (c) That 1 Italian is worth $\frac{3}{4}$ soldier or 1 civilian.

Insofar as the foregoing figures are concerned, it is not believed that any of them can be accepted as a nation-wide criterion; therefore, it is believed that the only safe method of evaluating their individual services is to accept the Italians as accomplishing man for man what either a soldier or a civilian would accomplish. Thus, it will be seen that, if these Italian Service Units were to be disbanded or eliminated, it would be necessary to replace approximately 15,820 who are contributing directly to the war effort and, in most instances, at places where civilian labor is not available for such replacement. In considering the possible elimination or loss of the 14,875 who are contributing indirectly to the war effort, it must be realized that, while their

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work is not directly contributing to the war effort it, nevertheless, has considerable bearing on the conduct of the war as a whole and, therefore, the work being done by those men would have to be performed by someone, whether civilians, soldiers, or prisoners of war. The remaining 4,305, being little more than 10% of the total, is believed to be as small a percentage employed on non-essential activities as would be found in any widely dispersed group of personnel.

c. Justification for Liberalized Treatment of the Personnel of Italian Service Units.

(1) Justification for the liberalized treatment of Italian prisoners of war, who have enrolled in service units, can be advanced on several grounds. The most reasonable one being that the more privileges offered these men the greater effort they will make toward contributing to the war effort of this country. Furthermore, these Italians were promised in writing that they would receive the same liberties and pass privileges that are granted American soldiers (See Tab F). A great majority of the Italians are of the opinion that, because these promises were not kept, their own officers deliberately misconstrued or misinformed them regarding the liberties they were to receive upon enrolling in the service units. The officers are well aware, however, that we are not living up to the promises and inducements made prior to enrollment. It is not to be supposed that these men consider they are being afforded the liberties promised when they are taken in large groups to see museums, works of art, etc. These Italians wish to go out individually, meet their own race and associate with women, as any other soldier does. In this connection, about 60% of them claim blood relationship with citizens of this country. However, the conception of blood relationship under Italian standards is very liberal and not as recognized by the majority of American people.

(2) Further justification can be offered by the amount and type of work being performed by these Italians. Many of them possess critical skills and are being utilized on vital tasks and their removal or loss would cause an actual reduction in essential war activities. Another example is at the San Francisco Port of Embarkation, where 60% of all cargo is handled by personnel of Italian Service Units.

(3) Additional justification might be found in the attitude of the prisoners themselves. They now proclaim that the majority of them were drafted into the Italian Army against their will, before the United States entered the war, and that once in the Army, they could not refuse to bear arms against this country, even though such was their in inclination. Therefore, since they are now willing to actively participate on the side of the United Nations, it is beyond their conception why we will not accept them as co-belligerents and allies. They feel that they have been liberated from Fascism and, like the Free French, should be accepted as allies, and given privileges accordingly. This process of reasoning receives great support amongst the

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4,595,000 American citizens of Italian descent who are not only quite eager to fraternize with relatives and friends in the Italian Service Units, but who would also like to see their mother country forgiven and accepted as an ally by the United Nations.

(4) Further assistance in justifying the treatment of these Italians would be afforded if our own people were better educated regarding the privileges allowed all prisoners of war under provisions of the Geneva Convention. Few of our so-called patriotic organizations and citizens are aware of the fact that, not only Italian, but German prisoners of war as well, are allowed radios, chapels, newspapers, libraries, PX supplies, etc., and that, were such privileges denied them, it would immediately result in retaliatory measures being taken in the prisoner-of-war camps where our own captured soldiers are confined. Much of the unfavorable comment regarding "coddling" and "pampering" has sprung from ignorance of such matters. It would be of great benefit in the solution of this problem if the people of the United States definitely understood the distinction between "coddling" and international agreements.

(5) Despite the foregoing justifications, however, the greater bulk of the American public harbors a latent hostility toward all enemy personnel, and this hostility constantly seeks an opportunity to express itself. Furthermore, this hostility or resentment is an emotional one, implanted and inflamed by propaganda and cannot be eliminated by the presentation of factual data or information. Actually, the American people would prefer to see all Axis prisoners punished or ill-treated since it is the common belief that all prisoners of war were captured while killing American boys in action. For that reason, the Italians in question are, by and large, regarded as enemies and any other conception of general public opinion would be erroneous.

(6) To summarize, it must be stated that it is the belief of the majority of responsible officers associated with the Italian Service Unit problem that, in spite of all factual data which can be set forth in justification of the liberalized treatment afforded men who are all too eager to work on behalf of the United Nations, such data may silence but will never change the emotional attitude of the large bulk of American people who refuse to accept these one-time enemies in any other status but that of prisoners of war.

d. The Cause for the Incident at Fort Lawton, Washington.

(1) Public criticism regarding the "pampering" and "coddling" of Italian personnel was less of a factor in the attack made by colored soldiers on the Italian prisoners of war at Fort Lawton than was the question of racial resentment. A sample of the type of emotional literature directed at Italian prisoners of war by the Negro Press is shown in Tab G.

(2) Of the many colored soldiers questioned on this subject, the

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majority felt that their race was discriminated against in comparison with the treatment of Italians. Some of their reasons were: That Italians are considered white and accorded the privileges of white people regardless of the fact that they are prisoners of war; that, in some places, Italian prisoners of war are allowed in buildings, such as theaters and restaurants, that are off limits to the colored; that the Italians are entertained in the homes of American people where Negroes would not be accepted; that American white women, who would not go with colored soldiers, are going out with Italian prisoners. While none of these conditions actually existed at Fort Lawton, there are sufficient truths in the foregoing complaints, as regards the overall situation, to preclude denial.

(3) The riot which occurred at Fort Lawton on 14 August 1944, developed because of words exchanged between a colored soldier and a member of an Italian Service Unit. The colored soldier sought to strike or stab the Italian but himself was struck on the jaw and knocked unconscious. Retaliatory measures adopted by other colored soldiers resulted in a general attack upon all members of the Italian Service Unit, culminating in the lynching of one Italian and serious injury being inflicted upon many others. A complete and detailed investigation of this affair was conducted during the course of, and in conjunction with, this inquiry. An interim report of this investigation (WDSIG 333.9-Fort Lawton) was submitted through the Deputy Chief of Staff to The Commanding General, Army Service Forces, on 5 October 1944. A more detailed report is now in the process of preparation and will be submitted under separate heading in the near future. In view of the foregoing, it is not deemed necessary to include herein further details of the riot.

e. The Ways and Means to prevent further untoward incidents and overcome any adverse public attitude.

(1) There is one main factor in the prevention of untoward incidents regarding Italian prisoners of war, to-wit: Competent command supervision. It was definitely established during the course of this inquiry that forceful commanders, while apprehensive of potential disorders, were, nevertheless, self-confident in their ability to handle the situation, provided the responsibility for doing so was left to them. On the other hand, one or two commanders who might be said to have indicated less forceful ability were eager to receive instructions in the premises because, by such acceptance, the responsibility of decisions was lifted from their shoulders. It is not believed that any centralized command can be successful in obviating public resentment and in preventing incidents. Each area where Italians are utilized has a definite type of populace with different reactions and different attitudes. Therefore, instructions regarding the treatment of Italians which would be satisfactory or safe to enforce in one area might well lead to incidents elsewhere. A central headquarters could, of course, announce broad policies and prescribe the maximum liberties to be allowed members of Italian

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Service Units, but local commanders should be authorized to limit such liberties according to their own best judgment.

(2) Another way to avoid untoward incidents is to house these Italians in areas where their activities are not observed by American soldiers, and where their routes from barracks to work and to other activities do not bring them more than casually under the observance of American personnel. Also, visitors, since many of them are women, when going to see Italians should be required to do their visiting as unobtrusively as possible. Roads and areas which are least frequented by soldiers should be used. Many of those visitors arrive in cars loaded with girls, drinks, wine and food, and unless the resulting picnics are held in unfrequented areas away from the post proper, serious trouble is likely to result. The sight of American women fraternizing with Italian prisoners of war is inciting to nearly all American soldiers and even to civilians.

(3) Further precautions should be taken to insure that the Italians are not placed on duty where they come in close contact with women workers. Many of the Italians are young and good looking, also eager to be friendly. There is already one case, at least, where American parents have requested that an Italian prisoner be permitted or required to marry their daughter. In this respect, it is of interest to note the reaction of the British people, as shown in the New York Herald Tribune, 8 September 1944 (See Tab H), the heading being "Britons Demand 'Save our Girls from Italian Prisoners of War'."

(4) Another danger which could be avoided is that of rivalry or competition between American soldiers or civilians and Italians. In the matter of work assignments, the Italians should be kept separate from American labor. Where Italians have worked with American labor or American soldiers, they at first accomplished more, which antagonized the Americans who either persuaded them, by setting an example or threatened them until their output was reduced to the level of all. Such a procedure is not conducive to good feeling on either side.

(5) To overcome adverse public attitude will require a comprehensive program of education. A large proportion of our people still believe the atrocity stories they have read and the horror films they have seen. They think that large numbers of our own soldiers are undergoing hardships and abuse in foreign prison camps. Until this is disproved to their own satisfaction they will never view favorably the privileges afforded prisoners in this country. Furthermore, they place all blame for such leniency upon the military establishment.

f. DISCUSSION.

(1) In general, it may be said that the majority of commanders, utilizing the services of Italian prisoners, are warm in their praise of the work accomplished by this type of personnel. Most of these commanders stated

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that they could not get along without their Italian Service Units unless the Italians were replaced by soldier or civilian labor. Nevertheless, the presence of these Italians is the cause of considerable apprehension to everyone connected with their employment. If the commanders were assured of proper replacements, or if the work load imposed upon them were reduced, they would gladly dispense with the services of these foreigners.

(2) It will be recalled that, at the time these Italian Service Units were first being organized, international negotiations regarding their use were in progress between General Eisenhower and General Badoglio. Therefore, no publicity was given to the type of work about to be performed by Italian prisoners of war in this country. Consequently, the American public was unprepared for the appearance of these men in American uniforms at public places and military installations. Many soldiers and civilians, including some newspaper columnists, felt that the military establishment was attempting something unprecedented, and adopting a policy which was unmindful of the sacrifices made by our soldiers in North Africa and Italy. This attitude, to a great extent, still exists, and will be difficult, if not impossible, to change or placate. In other words, the American people as a whole are not yet in a mood to accept the Italians either as co-belligerents, allies or friends.

(3) American soldiers, on the whole, harbor similar feelings. There exists in the minds of our enlisted men a bitter, although restrained, resentment against some of the privileges afforded the Italian prisoners, such as access to Post Exchanges, reserve sections in theaters, and particularly in the wearing of American uniforms. This last, in the minds of many, is a condonation of Italy's entry and participation in the war, as well as the killing of our own soldiers.

(4) The Italians themselves are a confused and unhappy lot. Many of them have been in captivity from two to four years. Also, a large portion were captured by the British and subsequently transferred to American custody. The bulk of these prisoners are poorly educated, if not actually illiterate. Scarcely any of them have heard from their families since coming to this country. Also, while well aware that they are not being accorded the privileges promised them, they realize there is nothing that they can do to alter that situation. Nevertheless, confused as is their present status, they much prefer the conditions under which they now find themselves to confinement in a prisoner-of-war inclosure.

(5) There appear to be four possible courses open to the War Department, looking toward the solution of this problem regarding Italian personnel. These are:

- (a) To disband the Italian Service Units and return all Italian prisoners of war to Italy;
- (b) To continue the Italian Service Units as at present,

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imposing upon the commanders to whom such units are assigned the responsibility of: Deciding what liberties will be afforded them within authorized limits; preventing untoward incidents; and the acceptance of their presence by local civilians.

- (c) To disband all Italian Service Units and return the personnel of those units to a definite prisoner of war status.
- (d) To continue the Italian Service Units, accord them the privileges originally promised, while at the same time instigating strenuous publicity campaigns in an attempt to convince the American people that this is the proper course to pursue in the treatment of Italian prisoners of war.

In the opinion of the officers conducting this survey, as well as that of many responsible officials interviewed on this subject, the four courses of action cited above are presented in the order of their desirability.

g. CONCLUSIONS.

(1) That the Italian Service Units are definitely contributing to the war effort of this country.

(2) That the liberalized treatment of the Italians can be justified by factual data, but that such justification will not materially alter the emotions of our people who resent them anyhow.

(3) That much of the adverse criticism directed at the liberalized treatment of Italian prisoners is due to the public's ignorance of the provisions of the Geneva Convention regarding those privileges which are accorded all prisoners of war.

(4) That, because of racial segregation, as practiced in some parts of this country, the placing of Italian Service Units and colored troops in close proximity to each other is conducive to disturbance.

(5) That the fraternization of American women with Italian prisoners is resented by all American males, and, therefore, should be curtailed as much as possible.

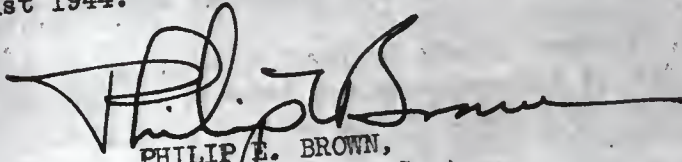
(6) That a centralized War Department agency should announce the maximum liberties which could be afforded personnel of the Italian Service Units, but that such announcements should not prevent local commanders from using their own judgment regarding the extent to which such liberties are permitted within authorized limitations.

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2. REMARKS OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL.

The Italian Service Unit situation has so many aspects, and is influenced by so many factors, that it should be understood that the foregoing presentation of views may be inapplicable to any one Italian Service Unit. However, it is my opinion that this report presents an accurate picture of the Italian Service Unit situation from an Army-wide standpoint. Accordingly, it is recommended that this report be referred to the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-1, for consideration in connection with his memorandum for the Deputy Chief of Staff of 18 August 1944.



PHILIP E. BROWN,
Brigadier General, U. S. Army,
Deputy The Inspector General.

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28 October 1944.

MEMORANDUM to The Commanding General, Army Service Forces.
 THRU: The Deputy Chief of Staff, U. S. Army.

Subject: Investigation of attack on Italian Service Unit personnel by
 American soldiers at Fort Lawton, Washington.

1. Under date of 5 October 1944, an interim report regarding the attack on Italian Service Unit personnel by American soldiers at Fort Lawton, Washington, was submitted by Brigadier General Elliot D. Cooke, pursuant to request of The Commanding General, Army Service Forces. In that report it was stated that, upon completion of the detailed investigation by Lieut. Colonel Curtis L. Williams, IGD, a complete report then would be submitted. The detailed investigation has now been completed, and General Cooke reports as follows:

2. a. On the night of 14-15 August 1944, a riot of serious proportions took place at Fort Lawton, Washington, in the course of which members of the 650th, 651st and 578th Port Companies, all Negro units commanded by white officers, attacked personnel of the 28th Italian Quartermaster Service Company. During this disturbance one member of the Italian Service Unit was hanged and many were seriously injured. At this time Fort Lawton was utilized as a staging area for the Seattle Port of Embarkation, and was commanded by Colonel Harry L. Branson (O-6198), TC. The Port of Embarkation was commanded by Brig. General Eley P. Denson (O-2619).

b. On the night of the riot, all troops involved were quartered in the 800 and 700 blocks of the 4th Section Area at Fort Lawton (See Exhibit A). Also, the 650th and 661st Port Companies were scheduled to depart for the San Francisco Port of Embarkation at about 1900 on the following day (15 August 1944). At the end of the work day, approximately 1700, on 14 August 1944, all officers of the foregoing organizations left the areas occupied by these units and proceeded to their quarters, either on the post about one mile distant, or in the City of Seattle about 7 miles away. Remaining in the area was only one officer, Captain Alan W. Christensen (O-243971), of the permanent personnel, who was assigned as "duty officer" for the 4th Section Area. The 4th Section Area was comprised of the 600, 700 and 800 blocks. Captain Christensen's post, when he was not inspecting the area, was at headquarters of the 4th Section, in building 830 (See Exhibit A). Also on duty in the 4th Section Area was one noncommissioned officer in charge of quarters for each company, and a fire guard in each of the three numbered blocks. In addition, an MP patrol from the post guardhouse was scheduled to tour the areas in a jeep at hourly intervals.

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On this night (14-15 August 1944), General Denison was in Spokane, Washington, on official duties pertaining to WAC recruiting, leaving Colonel Branson as acting Port Commander, in addition to his duties as Commanding Officer, Fort Lawton. He left him on the sidewalk in front of building 713, which building was occupied by part of the 578th Port Company. Denison went into the upper story of the building. Previous to the disturbance, and at about 2130 or 2145 on 14 August, Captain Christensen, duty officer for the 4th Section, was making a tour through the section for which he was responsible, and ascertained that Post Exchange Number 3, in building 323, which was patronized by white and Negro American soldiers, and by members of the 28th Italian Service Unit, was in the process of being closed for the night. Captain Christensen then went to the recreation hall, building 701, where he observed several groups of Negro soldiers playing cards. Captain Christensen proceeded on to the mess hall occupied by the 578th Port Company, TC (building 700) where he observed an impromptu party in progress, under the supervision of First Sergeant Wilbert E. Tanner (6459851), of the 578th Port Company. Captain Christensen took no exception to this unauthorized social gathering, but proceeded to the 800 block, and after inspecting that area, entered the headquarters of the 4th Section (building 330), at about 2230. Captain Christensen testified under oath that he went to sleep in building 830 at about 2300, and remained asleep for the rest of the night. The enlisted man on duty in charge of quarters in building 830 likewise testified under oath that he had occasion to look for Captain Christensen at about 2400, and that Captain Christensen was not in the building. However, the whereabouts of Captain Christensen, while questionable in itself, had no direct bearing upon the riot which subsequently took place, since no information was received at headquarters of the 4th Section regarding the disorder in question, and Captain Christensen did not know that such disturbance had taken place until the following morning.

On the night of 14 August 1944, many of the members of the 650th, 661st and 578th Port Companies had been drinking beer in Post Exchange Number 3, and some of the men had become intoxicated. Among those who drank too much was T/5 William D. Montgomery (32978458), of the 650th Port Company. At about 2300, Montgomery, accompanied by T/5 Addison George (38545856), and Cpl. Luther Larkin (38285182), all of the same company, were in building 700, and where the unauthorized party was in progress and, after leaving that building, walked up Lawton Road in a southerly direction. The three Negro soldiers, while proceeding toward the 600 block, met three Italian soldiers who were going in the opposite direction on Lawton Road. Montgomery shouted to the Italians as follows: "Shut up that God damn noise". One of the Italians spoke to his companions in his own language, whereupon Montgomery turned and ran toward them, holding his hand in the air as though brandishing a knife. Two of the Italians ran, but Corporal Major Rosario Sidoti (IR904315), stood his ground, and when Montgomery attempted to strike him, Sidoti parried the blow with his right hand, and with his left hand struck Montgomery on the jaw. They then proceeded to the vicinity of building 700, where they joined the group of soldiers who had previously gathered

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and knocked him to the ground, unconscious. The Italian then ran, with Montgomery's two companions following him and throwing stones at him. The two Negro soldiers then picked up Montgomery, carried him back to Virginia Avenue and laid him on the sidewalk in front of building 719, which building was occupied by part of the 650th Port Company. Larkin went into the upper story of the barracks, asking members of the 650th Port Company for a whistle. Other members of the 650th Port Company, just previously forewarned by Larkin ran into various buildings, inciting more soldiers to come out and avenge an assault that had been made by the Italians upon one of their comrades.

e. At about 2305 an MP patrol from the post guardhouse, consisting of S/Sgt. Charles M. Robinson (38366553), and Pvt. Clyde V. Lomax (34153538), both white, arrived in the vicinity of the intersection of Lawton Road and Virginia Avenue, in a jeep. They saw a large number of Negro soldiers surrounding another soldier (Montgomery) lying on the ground in front of building 719. The soldiers were very excited and told the MP's that they, the Negro soldiers, did not need any help but would handle the situation in their own way. After some argument, Robinson and Lomax were permitted to load Montgomery into the jeep for the purpose of transporting him to the hospital. As these MP's were departing with Montgomery, they saw the Negroes tearing down a fence around the mess hall (building 700), and otherwise arming themselves with sticks, stones and clubs.

f. In taking Montgomery to a hospital, Sgt. Robinson and Pvt. Lomax passed within 100 yards of the guardhouse, but they did not step nor enter the guardhouse for the purpose of warning the Sergeant of the Guard, or anyone else, of the seriousness of the situation in the 4th Section Area. Instead, these two MP's not only proceeded first to the hospital, but they also chose to take Montgomery to that hospital most distant from the scene of the disturbance. Furthermore, Sgt. Robinson and Pvt. Lomax remained at the hospital for several minutes in close proximity to a telephone, but failed to notify any responsible authority of what had taken place, or what was most obviously about to take place in the 700 block area. Only after these two MP's had spent some time in the hospital did they return to the guardhouse and, without having secured any further information than they initially had obtained, notified the Sergeant of the Guard that there was trouble in the Italian Area, and that some MP's had better be sent down there to take care of it.

g. Shortly after Sgt. Robinson and Pvt. Lomax departed with Montgomery for the hospital, Cpl. Larkin, having secured a whistle, summoned a crowd of soldiers and stated, "We are going down and beat the hell out of those Dagoes". Two members of the crowd ran across Lawton Road in the direction of buildings 668 and 667 and warned other members of the 650th and 651st Port Companies that a fight was going on between the Italians and the Negro soldiers. Sgt. Arthur J. Hurka (38547466), of the 650th Port Company, came out of barracks 668 and directed that members of the 650th and 651st Port Companies follow him. These men proceeded to the vicinity of building 700, where they joined the group of soldiers who had previously gathered

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there. Sgt. Hurks and Cpl. Larkin then led a small group of these Negro soldiers toward the Italian area. When they had arrived at the intersection of Lawton Road and Wyoming Avenue, they stopped and threw stones and rocks against the walls and through the windows of building 708. Seeing that there were too many Italians for this small group to successfully attack, three of the original party who had gone with Sgt. Hurks and Cpl. Larkin returned to the vicinity of building 700 and there secured some 50 additional men to augment the first party in the vicinity of building 708. All then entered the Italian area, and, as the riot spread, were constantly being reinforced by other Negro soldiers. In the area and utilized that vehicle to run into and batter down the tent.

One side of the principal attack made by the Negro soldiers was more or less progressive in its course, going from building to building and culminating at the orderly room of the Italian Service Unit (building 713). Sufficient evidence could not be obtained to establish definitely exact time elements pertaining to each phase of the riot, but there has been established what occurred at each of the buildings and, in general, outside of those buildings. For clarity of understanding, what took place in each area will hereinafter be described separately.

Building 708 was the first barracks attacked. The Italians within that building at once turned out the lights and barricaded the doors. The assailants were apprehensive about entering or attempting to enter an unlighted building and, therefore, contented themselves with breaking windows and throwing rocks through those windows into the building. They then moved on to attack building 709. Later, however, having secured flashlights and axes the soldiers returned to 708, broke in the door and a party of ten, armed with clubs and other weapons entered the building. This group, led by 1/s Herman Johnson (36891145), called upon the Italians hidden within that building to come out from hiding since they, Johnson and party, were N.P.S. This, of course, was merely a ruse and as each Italian disclosed himself he was immediately attacked by Johnson and his companions. Many of those Italians were found, after the riot, to have been seriously wounded.

When the Negro soldiers arrived at building 709 they found the lights had been extinguished and the doors barricaded. They attacked the exterior of this building in the same manner as 708, but never gained entry. At the height of the attack, however, an Italian, one Pvt. Guglielmo Olivetto (12903870), became more alarmed than his companions and in a panic ran to a window of the barracks and leaped out. He was immediately seized upon by five Negro soldiers and was last seen being dragged toward the woods west of the Italian area. It was this Italian who, on the following morning (15 August) was found hanged (See paragraph f).

The next phase of the attack was made against a pyramidal tent (Ksh. B), which was used for the purpose of housing American enlisted soldiers.

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During the riotous period, Negroes were attacking the buildings they were also clubbing the Italians who abandoned the barracks personnel on duty with the Italian Service Unit. One white American soldier, namely: Pfc. Harold M. Gould (32908576), and an Italian were inside the tent when the attackers arrived. The latter called upon those inside the tent to come out. Gould protested that he was an American soldier but was bidden to come out anyhow. When he finally did so, he was immediately beaten with clubs and stones, suffering a broken arm as well as face and scalp lacerations. Gould escaped further injury at that time by running into the orderly room of the Italian Service Unit. The Italian who was inside the tent with Gould refused to come out, whereupon the rioters secured a jeep found parked in the area and utilized that vehicle to run into and batter down the tent. One side of the tent finally collapsed, but the Italian remained underneath and was not further molested by the Negro soldiers. For with Sgt. Robert E. [REDACTED] (33190809), First Sergeant of the 480th Port Company. Sgt. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] 1. Some 30 or 40 Italians had run into the orderly room of the Italian Service Unit (building 715) in the belief and hope that they would be protected by the American personnel on duty in that building. Sgt. Grant H. Farr (19033759), an American white soldier on duty with the 28th Italian Quartermaster Service Unit, caused the doors of the orderly room to be closed and barricaded. He caused the lights to be left burning, however, in the belief that the Negroes would not attack the building when they saw it contained American personnel. Nevertheless, Sgt. Farr, according to his own testimony, called by telephone and informed the corporal of the guard, T/S Andrew David (38141343), that a riot was in progress and requested help. No record of incoming calls was kept by T/S David and both he and the sergeant of the guard, S/Sgt. Regis A. Callahan (35354199), gave vague testimony as to whether or not Sgt. Farr's message was ever received. Sgt. Farr was unable to make further calls on the telephone because the orderly room was soon being attacked. The attackers were more excited and exhibited greater violence than previously. They succeeded in breaking through the barricaded door and immediately attacked all personnel found in the building. None of the Italians or American soldiers who were inside escaped without injury. Even those who jumped through the windows were stoned and clubbed on the outside. S/Sgt. Fred J. Parata (39011319), a white American soldier who had, at the beginning of the fight, gone into the orderly room, was stabbed in the chest, cut in the groin and clubbed over the head. The Italian First Sergeant, Auguste Todde (18903873), attempted to gain protection for himself and his men by informing the Negroes that all inside the orderly room were Americans, nevertheless, Sgt. Todde was severely injured, but did succeed in escaping from the building during the fight, only to be further injured outside the building. Sgt. [REDACTED] had left for the Officers Club, the closing of which it was his duty to supervise at midnight. Leaving word for the Officer on duty. Although barracks 711 was not actually attacked in the same manner as the buildings previously mentioned, it was at one time during the riot, surrounded by rioters who were preparing to set fire to the building. However, when other Negroes with flashlights entered building 708, the soldiers around building 711 desisted from their attempts to burn down the latter and joined those who had entered building 708.

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n. During the entire period while the Negroes were attacking the buildings they were also clubbing the Italians who abandoned the barracks in an effort to get out of the riot. If an Italian left his barracks he was immediately pursued by the Negroes. The Negroes even went so far as to follow the Italians to the shoreline of Puget Sound (a mile distant). They broke through the crowd and, placing himself between them and the door, drew his pistol and shot at the meantime; when Sgt. Roginsen and Pvt. Lomax finally reached the guardhouse, at approximately 2330, and reported what they had seen in the 4th Section Area. Sgt. Callahan dispatched Sgt. Thurman M. Jones (15635327) and three other MP's, all white, to investigate. No attempt was made to notify Captain Christensen of the disturbance that appeared to be taking place in the 4th Section Area. Sgt. Jones and his party left the guardhouse and proceeded directly to the Italian area but as they arrived in the vicinity of building 719 they stopped to confer with Sgt. Robert B. Aubry (38198909), First Sergeant of the 660th Port Company. Sgt. Aubry, between that time Sgt. Jones left the guardhouse and arrived at building 719, had called the post guardhouse and reported that a disturbance was in progress. While talking to Sgt. Aubry, Sgt. Jones was joined by Pfc. John M. Pinkney (37730913) of the 660th Port Company who, although not an MP, had secured for himself an MP brassard and club, and had waited in front of 719 for the MPs to arrive, in order that he might assist in breaking up the riot. Sgt. Jones, Pfc. Pinkney, and the three other MP's proceeded to the Italian area on foot. Seeing by the lights in building 713 what was taking place therein, Sgt. Jones led his party directly to that point. As Sgt. Jones entered the orderly room door, one of the rioters struck at him with a club. The blow missed Sgt. Jones, but hit another MP right behind him. Fighting inside the building was still in progress, particularly in rooms Y and X (as shown in Exh. C) of Sgt. Jones went into room Y and, grasping one offender by the collar, pulled him out of the room and forced him to leave the building. Other Negroes, at the sight of Sgt. Jones and his MP's, began to leave the building, both through the doors and through the windows. Sgt. Jones and his party then began to administer to the wounded. One MP was sent to secure ambulances and medical aid.

At about 0100, all of the known injured, both Italian and American, had been taken to the hospital. As soon as Sgt. Callahan had sent Sgt. Jones and his party to the Italian area, Callahan called the MP barracks by telephone and caused all available MP's therein to be alerted. Immediately thereafter, Callahan received the telephone call from Sgt. Aubry, in which Aubry stated that there was serious trouble between the men of his company and the Italian prisoners. Callahan then called the post headquarters in search of the Officer of the Day, 2d Lieut. James B. Sistrunk (01060975). Sgt. Callahan was informed that Lieut. Sistrunk had left for the Officers Club, the closing of which it was his duty to supervise at midnight. Leaving word for the Officer of the Day to come to the guardhouse as soon as possible, Sgt. Callahan, accompanied by Cpl. John M. Biscan (35390724), went in a car to the 700 block area. When he arrived on Virginia Avenue, Sgt. Callahan realized at once the serious proportions to which the riot had grown, and ordered Cpl. Biscan to return to the MP barracks and bring all available personnel of those responsible for, or of those who had participated in, the riot.

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MP's to the scene of the fighting as quickly as possible. Sgt. Callahan then walked directly to the Italian area, where he found a group of rioters still trying to break into one of the barracks. Callahan forced his way through the crowd and, placing himself between them and the door, drew his pistol and threatened to shoot the first man who moved toward him. Callahan was still guarding the building when additional MP's arrived on the scene. He placed a guard at the barracks where he had been standing, and proceeded to systematically arrange other sentries, as well as to clear the Italian Quartermaster area of the rioters. Medical Officer (Captain Harold Overholt, 0092799, M), and caused the body to be removed and taken to the hospital for an autopsy. The Officer of the Day, Lieut. Sistrunk, arrived in the Italian area after the riot had been quelled. He found Sgt. Callahan posting sentries around the area, and observed most of the Negro soldiers returning to or entering their own barracks. Lieut. Sistrunk returned to the guardhouse, and shortly after 2400, called Major William W. Orem (0208231), who was Provost Marshal and Security Officer, and informed that officer of what had taken place. Lieut. Sistrunk took no further action regarding this affair.

r. The Provost Marshal, Major Orem, reached the guardhouse at about 0030, 15 August, and from there proceeded to the Italian area. Major Orem concerned himself principally with seeing that sentries were placed around the area, and that the colored soldiers returned to their barracks. Thereafter, Major Orem inspected the barracks, and directed the lights to be turned off. He did not, however, require any bed check to be made, nor did he attempt in any way to ascertain the soldiers who had participated in the riot, or showed evidence of having participated, or possessed weapons of a dangerous character. An effort was made under the supervision of an Italian captain to determine whether or not any Italians were missing, but this was never satisfactorily completed, because of the number of Italians in the hospital, and still in hiding outside the area. strangulation (See Exh. B).

s. At about 0100, all of the known injured, both Italian and American, had been evacuated from the area and taken to hospitals. At this time, approximately 0130, Major Orem returned to the guardhouse and called the Post Commander, Colonel Branson, at his quarters on the post, and informed him that there had been a fight between the Negroes and the Italians. Exactly what was said in the course of this telephonic conversation cannot be stated factually. Col. Branson testified that Major Orem did not indicate the extent nor seriousness of the riot which had occurred, nor even the number of persons injured, but did offer assurance to Col. Branson that everything was under control. Major Orem, on the other hand, states that he did tell Col. Branson that everything was under control, but he further testified that he informed Col. Branson of the number of injured persons and, by implication at least, of the seriousness of the affair. Regardless of what was said, Col. Branson did not that night go to the scene of the riot, nor did he issue any orders looking toward the identification or apprehension of those responsible for, or of those who had participated in, the riot. Group, Fort Lawton, Washington.

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At about 0530 on the morning of 15 August 1944, Pvt. Lomax and Pvt. Pinkney were patrolling in a jeep on the road some 300 or 400 yards north and west of the Italian area. Looking in the woods some 50 yards off the road, they saw the body of Guglielmo Olivotto (IE903870), suspended by the neck by a rope attached to the lower of three steel cables stretched across a deep ravine (these cables were a part of an obstacle course). Notification of this discovery was communicated to the Provost Marshal, Major Orem, who came at once to the scene of the hanging. Major Orem immediately secured the services of a medical officer (Captain Harold Swerdloff, 0392799, MG), and caused the body to be removed and taken to the hospital for an autopsy. No photographs were taken of the body while it was still hanging, and no effort was made to secure finger prints. Major Orem did place a piece of cardboard over two foot prints found where the body was hanging, but no casts were made of those prints and they later were obliterated. A photograph of the place where Olivotto was hanged was subsequently taken (Exh. D), and this, together with testimony secured during the course of this investigation, established the following:

- (1) From where he was hanging, Olivotto's feet were approximately 4 1/2 feet above ground level.
- (2) The place on the steel cable where the rope was tied was beyond reach of even taller men than Olivotto, and could only have been secured there by someone walking out along the cable (Exh. D).
- (3) The vertebrae of Olivotto's neck were neither displaced nor broken.
- (4) The autopsy performed by Captain John H. Walker (0422700) MG, established the fact that Olivotto had died from strangulation (See Exh. E).

In the opinion of medical officers, as well as of the officer conducting this investigation, the foregoing facts preclude the possibility of Olivotto having committed suicide.

The discovery of Olivotto's body, and the actions taken immediately following this discovery, were communicated to the Post Commander, Colonel Branson. Shortly thereafter, Col. Branson proceeded to the Italian area, and caused to be assembled the following officers:

- Colonel Frederick W. Teague (0468706), Chief of Staff, Seattle Port of Embarkation.
- Colonel Henry J. Kleinhon (0119738), Inspector General, Seattle Port of Embarkation.

Colonel Branson approved the action of Col. Teague, and at once departed from Spokane for Seattle by automobile.

Col. Alfred L. Baylies (05874), Officer in Charge of the Command Group, Fort Lawton, Washington.

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(2) Col. Baylies caused the 250th, 251st and 278th Port Companies, Lt. Col. Lee H. Beckley (0236865), Director of Operations, Fortilities at Fort Lawton, Washington. In the process of this move, Col. Baylies ascertained that many of these soldiers had knives in their possession (See Tab. F). As a result, Major William W. Orem, Provost Marshal, Fort Lawton, Washington, knives and dangerous weapons which they had in their possession taken from them. However, Major George H. McNay (0244947), Post Engineer, Fort Lawton, was taken. Washington. course of this investigation, several of the knives were identified by their owners, including one which was stained with human blood. To these officers, Col. Branson issued orders and instructions substantially as follows:

(1) Lt. Col. Beckley, at Officer's call on the morning of 15 August, informed (1) That the time of departure of the train that was to transport the 250th and 251st Port Companies (destined for the San Francisco Port of Embarkation) would be advanced from 1900 to 1300 that same day and enter the area, both on the 15th and 16th of August, before investigators could properly search (2) That a member of the Inspector General's Department would accompany these two units, and while on the train, discover and apprehend those guilty of participating in the riot of the previous night.

(3) That Col. Alfred L. Baylies was appointed Security Officer for Fort Lawton Staging Area, and that Colonel Baylies would insure that the Negro troops were removed from the proximity of the Italian area as expeditiously as possible, which might have offered conclusive evidence regarding certain of the participants in the rioting. (4) Also, the rocks, clubs and other weapons. That no troops would utilize the obstacle course, nor enter the area where Olivetto's body had been found hanging, until after a thorough investigation of that area had been completed by criminal investigators attached to the security section.

(5) The Inspector General, Seattle Port of Embarkation, and two enlisted invent (6) That the Post Engineer would at once cause the repair of damage done to barracks in the Italian area, and conducted independently of the other.

(6) That an investigation of the whole affair would be initiated by the Inspector General, Seattle Port of Embarkation, Chief of Staff, Seattle Port of Embarkation, in the presence of Col. Branson, relieved the foregoing instructions, as issued by Colonel Branson, were acted upon in the following manner: (1) Major Crawford (0-148409) GSC, Director of Intelligence and Internal Security. This was done at the instigation of Major Crawford, who maintained (1) Colonel Teague returned to Headquarters, Seattle Port of Embarkation and, doubtful of Col. Branson's judgment in wishing to speed the departure of the Negro troops before an investigation could be held, informed the War Department of what had taken place, and obtained a 72-hour delay in the departure time of the 250th and 251st Port Companies. Colonel Teague then called General Denson in Spokane, and advised him of the situation. General Denson approved the action of Col. Teague, and at once departed from Spokane for Seattle by automobile.

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(2) Col. Baylies caused the 650th, 651st and 578th Port Companies to be moved to areas as far distant from the Italians as facilities at Fort Lawton permitted. In the process of this move, Col. Baylies observed that many of these soldiers had knives in their possession (See Exh. F). As a security measure, Col. Baylies caused them to be searched and the knives and dangerous weapons which they had in their possession taken from them. However, at the time, no record was kept of persons from whom the knives were taken. During the course of this investigation, several of the knives were identified by their owners, including one which was stained with human blood (Exh. G).

(3) In addition to the investigation directed by General Denson, the Post Commander, Colonel Branson, called on the morning of 15 August, informed all officers of the Operations Division that troops would not utilize the obstacle course, nor enter the area, in the vicinity of the obstacle course until further orders. Despite this warning, troops did enter the area, both on the 15th and 16th of August, before investigators could properly search the area for foot prints and other evidence which might have assisted in determining the persons who had participated in the hanging of Olivetto. It was recommended that the cost of repairs be collected from men-which members of these two organizations without, however, having determined just

(4) The Post Engineer, Major McNay, sent 15 or 20 men into the Italian area to repair the barracks as directed by the Post Commander. In accomplishing these repairs, the workmen, perforce, obliterated all finger prints, et cetera, which might have offered conclusive evidence regarding certain of the participants in the rioting. Also, the rocks, clubs and other weapons utilized by the rioters, on some of which was evidence of human blood (Exh. H), were gathered up without regard to the possibility of the need for them being examined for finger prints, of all those who had been returned to the riot, and consequently some of these soldiers are now

(5) The Inspector General, Seattle Port of Embarkation, and two enlisted investigators from the Provost Marshal's office, started investigating the riot, each investigation being conducted independently of the other.

(1) In an endeavor to establish the facts connected with this incident, it was necessary for the facts connected with this testimony. During the afternoon of 15 August 1944, Col. Teague, Chief of Staff, Seattle Port of Embarkation, in the presence of Col. Branson, relieved Lt. Col. Kleinhen, IGD, from the duty of investigating the riot, and assigned this duty to Major Irving R. Crawford (O-148469) GSC, Director of Intelligence and Internal Security. This was done at the instigation of Major Crawford, who maintained that the investigation of the Inspector General was interfering with the original investigation being undertaken by Crawford's subordinates. At about 2200 on 15 August, General Denson reached Seattle and resumed command of the Port of Embarkation. On 16 August, General Denson directed that Captain S.K. Tyson (O-286382), IGD, should act as liaison officer with the investigating officers. Subsequently, and in order to clarify the scope and responsibility of the investigators, General Denson identified and named, sufficient

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published written orders to the effect that the Director of Intelligence would conduct that part of the investigation relating to the criminal side of the riot, and that the Inspector General would conduct that part of the investigation not related with criminal acts. Two days after these orders had been published, an officer from the Office of the Inspector General, War Department, arrived in Seattle and, under proper War Department directives, took over the entire investigation, utilizing, however, the services of those officers who had been conducting the investigation prior to his arrival.

In addition to the investigation directed by General Denson, the Post Commander, Colonel Branson, appointed a board of three officers to investigate the circumstances surrounding the riot to determine the cause and to fix the responsibility for property damage. The Recorder of this Board was Captain Christensen, who was duty officer in the 4th Section on the night of the riot, and of whose whereabouts at the time of the riot there is conflicting testimony. In a rather brief report, this Board found the 650th and 651st Port Companies responsible for the damage done to the various buildings, and recommended that the cost of repairs be collected from members of those two organizations without, however, having determined just which members had participated in the disturbance.

When, on 15 August, authorities at the San Francisco Port of Embarkation were informed of the 72 hours delay in shipment of the two port companies involved in the riot, a new sail date of 31 August 1944 was issued. This date was subsequently changed by the War Department to 25 August, and the troops left Seattle on 23 August 1944. They departed overseas before the investigating officers had discovered the names of all those who had participated in the riot, and consequently some of these soldiers are now being returned to this country for interrogation and probable court-martial.

DISCUSSION: Although two of these organizations were not a single officer belonging to any of the units involved in the riot, there had been minor altercations in the Post Exchange between Negroes and Caucasians. When, on 15 August, authorities at the San Francisco Port of Embarkation were informed of the 72 hours delay in shipment of the two port companies involved in the riot, a new sail date of 31 August 1944 was issued. This date was subsequently changed by the War Department to 25 August, and the troops left Seattle on 23 August 1944. They departed overseas before the investigating officers had discovered the names of all those who had participated in the riot, and consequently some of these soldiers are now being returned to this country for interrogation and probable court-martial.

(1) In an endeavor to establish the facts connected with this incident, it was necessary for the investigating officers to obtain sworn testimony from 164 witnesses (Exhibit J), many of whom were interviewed several times. The investigating officers visited the scenes of the rioting and hanging; examined all available evidence, and obtained assistance from the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the local civilian authorities in the form of laboratory tests of the weapons and clothing. In addition to the 164 witnesses interrogated, there were, at the time of this investigation, many potential witnesses in the 650th and 651st Port Companies, who, if recalled and questioned, could have further identified those who participated in the riot on the night of 14 August 1944. The witnesses available finally identified and named some 55 soldiers who participated in the assault against the 28th Italian Quartermaster Company, however, the investigating officers feel that, of the 55 so identified and named, sufficient

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evidence to warrant the prosecution of only 43 has been obtained during this investigation. Further interrogation by local investigators may produce more. In this connection, Lieut. Colonel Leon Jaworski (O-909207), JAGD, the designated Trial Judge Advocate, at his own request was afforded the privilege of being present while witnesses were interrogated. This procedure was followed in this case with a view to affording opportunity to Col. Jaworski to familiarize himself with the evidence, in the event it is to be used in court-martial trials of any individuals connected with this case.

(2) A scrutiny of Exhibit A will show that the 28th Italian Quartermaster Service Company was housed in an area at Fort Lawton immediately adjacent to and, for the most part, surrounded by areas wherein Negro troops were quartered. Furthermore, the Italians, by being located as they were, had to pass through areas occupied by Negro soldiers while going to and from work, and both types of personnel utilized the same Post Exchange at the same hours each day. Beer was sold to both Americans and Italians with equal readiness, and a customer could consume any quantity he desired, provided he did not become ostensibly intoxicated. Previous to the riot, there had been minor altercations in the Post Exchange between Negroes and Italians, and even between Italians and white American soldiers. The post authorities could scarcely have been ignorant of the general feeling regarding the Italians because, while undergoing interrogation, both commissioned and enlisted personnel manifested an inherent dislike for the Italian prisoners of war. Such antagonism, therefore, must have been prevalent prior to 14 August. Despite this, no precautionary measures had been taken to prevent the mingling of these groups, nor to guard against such a disturbance as took place 14 August. It is quite significant, also, that not a single officer belonging to any of the units involved in the riot was on duty the night of 14-15 August, although two of these organizations were scheduled to leave for an overseas destination the following day. An indication of the results of such laxity is shown by the fact that, on the night of 14 August, just prior to the incident wherein Montgomery made an assault upon the three Italians, some Negro soldiers had, without provocation, talked of going into the Italian area, in order "To have some fun with the Italians".

(3) A further indication of the racial prejudices extant was shown when Cpl. Luther Larkin and Pfc. Addison George carried the injured and intoxicated Montgomery to building 719. These two did not remain and give aid to Montgomery but instead ran into the adjacent buildings, inciting the soldiers therein by informing them that Montgomery had been seriously injured by the Italians, and exhorted all present to come out and avenge the insult which the Italians had perpetrated. Larkin even secured a whistle in order to assemble as many soldiers as possible. He then incited them to riot, by asking them to go to the Italian area and "Beat the hell out of

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these damn Dagoes". In the excitement, two of his listeners ran across Lawton Road and entered buildings 668 and 667 and informed the persons occupying those buildings that a fight was already going on between the Italians and members of the 650th and 651st Port Companies. Thus, it will be seen that the Negroes were easily and readily induced into violence against the Italians.

(4) The conduct of the two MP's, Sgt. Robinson and Pvt. Lomax, who first saw the riot forming, yet failed to take immediate steps toward the quelling of that disturbance, reflects, if not cowardice, a decided lack of proper training and a clear violation of the 96th Article of War. Despite these facts, neither of these men have been censured nor punished in any way.

(5) Whether or not Captain Christensen was asleep in headquarters of the 4th Section when the riot occurred, as he testified, or was absent, as the NCO in charge of quarters testified, could not be established beyond these two conflicting statements. However, the fact remains that a serious riot took place within the area for which Captain Christensen was responsible, and without Captain Christensen ever appearing on the scene to assist in quelling the disturbance, which fact, together with the testimony of the charge of quarters, casts some doubt on the correctness of Captain Christensen's statement regarding his whereabouts at the time of the riot. However, his whereabouts and actions that night were not inquired into by his superiors and he subsequently became one of the three members of a board of officers appointed to investigate the riot and fix responsibility for its occurrence. In the report submitted by this Board, no fault was found with the action of any of the permanent personnel the night of 14-15 August.

(6) The actions of Sgt. Jones and the MP's who accompanied him to the scene of the riot, and the quelling of that riot in and around the orderly room, are deemed commendable. Nevertheless, none of these MP's could or would identify a single Negro as having participated in the riot, although Sgt. Jones and his companions were in a fully lighted orderly room for from 15 to 20 minutes with a large number of the rioters. This failure to identify the offenders is scarcely understandable, since Pvt. Pinkney, the one Negro soldier who voluntarily assisted in quelling the riot, as well as most of the Italians who were attacked, identified many of the participants. Because of this, the investigating officers cannot help but believe that the white MP's had, for some undetermined reason, agreed amongst themselves not to identify any of the rioters.

(7) Lieut. Sistrunk and Major Orem arrived upon the scene after the riot had ceased or had been brought under control. Many of the rioters, however, were still in the vicinity and could have been apprehended, or at least identified. No attempt along these lines was made by either officer. Instead, both were content with getting the rioters into bed and the lights

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in the barracks extinguished. This failure to secure identifications, which might reasonably be expected as a necessary requisite for subsequent disciplinary action, is considered particularly reprehensible because it rendered the final detection of the participants more difficult and certainly contributed to some of the guilty persons escaping justice. Furthermore, Major Orem's action in informing Colonel Branson that "Everything was under control", when from 20 to 30 persons lay seriously (some critically) injured, with not a single one of their attackers either apprehended or identified, constituted such an incomplete presentation of the facts and reflected such a decided lack of discernment for an officer of his grade, or such a complete failure to appreciate his duties and responsibilities under the circumstances, or both, as to raise question as to his qualifications for his grade and present assignment.

(8) The actions of Colonel Branson with relation to this entire affair can scarcely be construed as those of a competent commander when confronted with an emergency. Regardless of the exact conversation which took place over the telephone between Colonel Branson and Major Orem on the night of the riot, it is believed that Colonel Branson should have immediately determined the proportions and seriousness of the disturbance which had been reported to him. Moreover, if, as Major Orem testified, Colonel Branson was made aware of the extent and seriousness of the riot, yet failed to instigate an immediate investigation looking toward the administration of justice, such act of omission would be deemed extremely reprehensible, particularly so in view of the fact that not a single officer of the units involved was on duty in the area. Also, on the morning of 15 August 1944, when Colonel Branson directed the immediate repair of all damages done by the rioters without regard to the securing of finger prints, foot prints and other material evidence, he contributed greatly to the confusion of subsequent investigations and also to the difficulty of administering justice. Colonel Branson's attempts to hasten the departure overseas of the troops involved in the riot clearly indicated a failure to appreciate the gravity of the situation confronting him in connection with the maintenance of proper discipline and the administration of military justice. Furthermore, Colonel Branson's failure to ascertain personally the degree to which some members of his own command were responsible for the proportions to which the riot developed, with a view to initiating disciplinary action, evidences such laxity as to raise question as to his ability to command.

(9) The absence on official duties of General Denson at the time of the riot was unfortunate, but in no way reflects upon his performance of duties.

2. CONCLUSIONS.

(1) That, as a result of racial prejudice, certain members of the 650th, 651st and 578th Port Companies (Exh. I) rioted and attacked with

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dangerous weapons members of the 28th Italian Quartermaster Service Company, which attack resulted in the death by hanging of one Italian and in the serious injury of many others.

(2) That S/Sgt. Chas. M. Robinson and Pvt. Clyde V. Lomax clearly violated the 96th Article of War, not only by allowing a riot to form in their presence without attempting to prevent it, but also by not immediately informing their superiors of what was taking place.

(3) That the actions of Major William W. Orem and 2d Lieut. James B. Sistrunk on the night of the riot were such as to raise question regarding their qualifications for their present grade and assignment.

(4) That the actions of Colonel Harry L. Branson with regard to the maintenance of proper discipline and the administration of military justice in connection with the riot were such as to raise question as to his ability to command.

aa. RECOMMENDATION.

That appropriate action be taken with regard to each of the individuals concerning whom a conclusion is set forth above.

3. VIEWS OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL.

I concur in the foregoing report and recommend that two copies thereof be referred to the Chief of Transportation with instructions:

a. To cause appropriate action to be taken regarding each of the individuals regarding whom a conclusion is set forth in the report, and to report action taken.

b. To furnish one copy of the report to the Commanding General, Seattle Port of Embarkation, for use in connection with the impending court-martial trials arising from this investigation.

4. It is requested that, when it shall have served its purpose, the original copy of this report, together with copies of subsequent action letters in this case, be transmitted to this office for file.

Philip E. Brown
PHILIP E. BROWN,
Brigadier General, U. S. Army,
Deputy The Inspector General.

10 Incls.
Exhibits A to J, 30 Oct 57
Incl.

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